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**Congress of the United States**  
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**COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WORKER AND FAMILY SUPPORT

**COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT  
AND REFORM**

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CIVIL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT

**ASSISTANT WHIP**

**Statement and Questions for the Record**  
**Committee on Ways and Means**  
**Caring for Aging Americans**  
**November 14, 2019**  
**Congressman Jimmy Gomez**

This important hearing demonstrated that millions of American families face seemingly impossible choices and difficult burdens when it comes to caring for our aging population. It is clear that we need to take action to ensure that older Americans are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

We also need to urgently address our society's caregivers. Professional caregivers—from nurses to home health aides—too often lack the supports they need to succeed. But many caregivers are not professionals, and this is a growing crisis: Millions of Americans are undertaking the burden of caring for a parent or spouse, including my own family. As Ms. Brown mentioned in her testimony, 60% of people caring for adult relatives or friends also have full or part time job, and there are significant consequences on caregivers' careers, savings, and quality of life.

The United States is the only industrialized country that does not guarantee any access to paid family leave. With a nationwide paid leave program like the one we have in California, working families would have the supports they need to provide adequate care for spouses, aging parents, and children—and can return to the workforce ready to perform. I look forward to continuing work with Chairman Neal and the Committee to bring the FAMILY Act to a markup.

Housing insecurity is another key issue for too many aging Americans, especially for seniors on fixed incomes in places like Los Angeles, where the cost of housing continues to rise. Dr. Lynn's testimony elaborates:

"Without improvements, more than half of Americans who lived their working lives in the middle class will be unable to afford housing in retirement, within ten years... We already have a growing population of elderly nomads who live in cars and tents. Without serious attention and planning, we will have elderly paupers on our streets and in our parks in large numbers."

I look forward to working with Chairman Neal and the Committee to address housing insecurity among seniors.

***Questions for Dr. Lynn:***

1. What steps can Congress take to help seniors continue to stay in their homes in the face of changes in their abilities and rising housing costs?
2. In the absence of a paid leave program that provides leaves for caregiving, what interventions can best support caregivers who also work on a full- or part-time basis?